

Annual Report 2015

*Soil and Water
~ Yours for Life*

Stanly County Soil and Water Conservation District



The Stanly County Soil and Water Conservation District proudly presents our 2015 Annual Report. Partnering with local, state and federal governments, we offer cost sharing opportunities and economic incentives to Stanly County land-owners, with an emphasis on educating the public about conservation practices. We believe conservation education nurtures an attitude of good stewardship in the hearts and minds of children who will be future caretakers of our natural resources.

Fiscal Year 2014-2015 was a year of much progress towards preserving our precious soil and water resources. However, much work remains to be done. We are confident that the upcoming year will bring us even closer to our goal of making all citizens of Stanly County more aware of how important our resources are to our existence and of the programs and services available to them through our office.

Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District



The Stanly SWCD Board of Supervisors hold regular monthly meetings on the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 a.m. at the Agri-Civic Center in Albemarle. The meetings are open to the public. Anyone interested in conservation is encouraged to attend. Any change in meeting dates is posted at the SWCD office and on our website, www.stanlycountync.gov/soil-and-water.

Mission Statement

The mission of Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide education, information and technical assistance to citizens of Stanly County for the conservation of our soil and water resources.

History of Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District



I, THAD EURE, Secretary of State of the State of North Carolina, in compliance with Section 14 of Chapter 139 of the General Statutes of North Carolina, do hereby certify that an application for the creation of a soil conservation district has been filed by the duly appointed supervisors of the STANLY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT in the office of the Secretary of State, said district being one of five such districts formed out of the BROWN CREEK SOIL CONSERVATION DISTRICT, the latter having been organized and having filed appropriate documents in this office on August 14, 1937; that the name STANLY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT does not conflict with and is not deceptively similar or identical to that of any other soil conservation district in this State; that there is attached to said application a statement by the Chairman of the State Soil Conservation Committee, all of which have been examined and are found to comply with the requirements set forth in the said Section 14 of Chapter 139 of the General Statutes providing for the dividing of large soil conservation districts into two or more districts; and that the organization of STANLY SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT has been duly completed incident to its being constituted a governmental subdivision of this State and a body corporate and politic, all as provided in the Act herein before referred to. IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and affixed my official seal.

DONE IN OFFICE at Raleigh, this 16th day of October, 1961.



Secretary of State

“In the early 1930s, along with the greatest depression this nation ever experienced, came an equally unparalleled ecological disaster known as the Dust Bowl. Following a severe and sustained drought in the Great Plains, the region's soil began to erode and blow away, creating huge black dust storms that blotted out the sun and swallowed the countryside. Thousands of “dust refugees” left the black fog to seek better lives. But the storms stretched across the nation. They reached south to Texas and east to New York. Dust even sifted into the White House and onto the desk of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. On Capitol Hill, while testifying about the erosion problem, soil scientist Hugh Hammond Bennett threw back the curtains to reveal a sky blackened by dust. Congress unanimously passed legislation declaring soil and water conservation a national policy and priority. Because nearly three-fourths of the continental United States is privately owned, Congress realized that only active, voluntary support from landowners would guarantee the success of conservation work on private land. In 1937, President Roosevelt wrote the governors of all the states recommending legislation that would allow local landowners to form soil conservation districts. Brown Creek Soil

& Water Conservation District in North Carolina was the first district established. The movement caught on across the country with district-enabling legislation passed in every state. Today, the country is blanketed with nearly 3,000 conservation districts.” from <http://www.nacdnet.org>

The rest, as they say, is history. Our history. The Brown Creek District included Anson, Stanly, Union, Montgomery and Richmond Counties. “On June 28, 1961, the State Soil Conservation Committee approved the application to divide the Brown Creek District into five one-county districts. On the basis of the information contained in the petition, the State Committee has determined the operation of the Stanly Soil Conservation District to be administratively practicable and feasible.” David S. Weaver, Chairman of the North Carolina State Conservation Committee to J. T. Mabry of Norwood.

As can be seen in the document above, Thad Eure, Secretary of State, signed into being the Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District on October 16, 1961

District Swears in Three Supervisors

Terry Blalock and Curtis Furr were both re-elected to the Stanly Soil and Water Board of Supervisors in November 2014. Mr. Blalock, a lifelong Stanly County farmer from Cottonville, has served since 2002. He has held the Chairman office since 2008 until present.



Mr. Furr, owner of Big Bear Creek Farms Inc. was first elected in 2008. He is an enthusiastic advocate for no-till farming with the use of cover crops. The District is fortunate to have both of them retain their positions on the Board.



There is a new face on the Board this year. Jody Smith is serving as an appointed Supervisor. He is a graduate of NC State University with a MS degree in Poultry Science. He is employed with Carolina Farm Credit as a Commercial Ag Loan Officer. Mr. Smith is the current Secretary/Treasurer of the SWCD Board.



District Celebrates Supervisor Retirement

Richard "Dickie" Clayton elected to end his tenure with the Stanly SWCD on December 1, 2014 after serving faithfully for 27 years. He held the office of Secretary/Treasurer his entire Supervisor career. Dickie was honored with a beautiful plaque and a porch rocker to commemorate his time with the District. We wish him well in all his endeavors.



No-Till Corn Yield Winner

Big Bear Creek Farms, Inc.

Curtis Furr received an award for having the highest No-Till Corn Yield in 2014. Furr averaged 242.12 bushels per acre. The variety was Pioneer 1105 YHR. The yield check was done off of a national plot which is a 10 acre field with 1.25 acres harvested. The national plot is more than just a one acre plot which is the standard on a state plot. This award is given by the NC Corn Producers Association.



District Staff

District Supervisors

Terry Blalock
Chairman

John Pickler
Vice-Chairman

Jody Smith
Secretary/Treasurer

Curtis Furr
Supervisor

June Mabry
Supervisor

Board Advisor

W. Chester Lowder

District Staff

Grayson Sarif
Cost Share Technician

Rita Little
Administrative/ Education
Coordinator

NRCS Staff

Nathan Lowder
District Conservationist

Lin Taylor
Civil Engineering
Technician

District Funding

Local districts, such as Stanly SWCD, receive funding from federal, state and local governments and independent fund-raising efforts. Funding sources include:

Local: Stanly SWCD receives funding from the Stanly County government which includes appropriations for office space, personnel, equipment, training and supplies.

State: North Carolina provides technical and administrative assistance and some equipment through the Division of Soil and Water Conservation. Financial assistance is also provided by the state and administered by the NC Soil and Water Conservation Commission with staff assistance from the division. Funding is available through:

Matching funds to districts

- Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP)
- Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP)
- Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP)
- Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP)

Federal: The Natural Resource Conservation Service provides Stanly SWCD with personnel, technical assistance and equipment in support of district conservation programs. This assistance comes through federally initiated conservation programs implemented through the local districts.

Independent Fund-Raising: Stanly SWCD sells pine tree seedlings once a year and rents a no-till drill to help fund education and conservation materials. Also available for sale is straw and excelsior erosion matting. Newsletter ads are sold to help defray the cost of printing our quarterly newsletter.

All funds received by a district are public monies. As a governmental body, Stanly SWCD properly administers and accounts for all funds.

Complimentary District Services

Each year the Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District provides numerous services to local producers and the general public at no cost. These services include but are not limited to:

- Soil sample boxes and information
- Burning permits
- Writing waste utilization plans
- Creating and updating certified conservation plans
- Resource conservation consultations
- Field Days and Ag Awareness Day
- Educational presentations for school age children and civic organizations

The SWCD also provides technical assistance to producers looking to update or retrofit best management practices on their farms.

Public Information Initiatives

Newsletter - The Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District publishes a quarterly newsletter in January, April, July and October. Total circulation for each issue is approximately 400. The newsletter provides information about District activities as well as programs available through various agencies. Advertising opportunities are available for businesses and individuals by purchasing ad space. The ads are printed in every newsletter which is also posted on our District website www.stanlycountync.gov/soil-and-water. Newsletters may also be received by email. To sign up, contact us at rlittle@stanlycountync.gov.

Local Newspaper - Much of the District's success is dependent upon local newspaper coverage and communications. The District is very appreciative of the excellent cooperation from the Stanly News and Press and the Weekly Post. This is an excellent way to stay informed of Soil and Water programs and opportunities.

Partners in Conservation

The District is charged with the responsibility of educating citizens, promoting soil and water conservation, and establishing conservation programs in the county. This task would not be possible without the cooperation of other agencies and local units of government. We would like to thank the following agencies for their services and support:

- Stanly County Board of Commissioners
- Stanly County Manager and administrative personnel
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- USDA Farm Service Agency
- NC Cooperative Extension Service
- NC Forest Service
- Stanly Agri Civic Center Staff
- Rural Economic and Community Development Service
- NC Division of Soil and Water
- NC Association of Soil and Water Districts
- NC Department of Agriculture
- National Association of Conservation Districts
- NC Wildlife Resources Commission
- Area VIII Soil and Water Conservation Districts



Thank you to our Newsletter Sponsors

Crop Production Services
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First Bank
Bank of NC
Southern States Agronomy Service
B.B. Oil, Inc.
Culp Lumber Company
Uwharrie Bank
Enterprise Rendering
Mauney Feed Mill
Newport Landowner Services
Strategic Investment Advisors

NC Agriculture Cost Share Program Year 2015

The Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District was allocated \$73,786 for the Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACPS), \$32,500 for the Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP), and \$3,589 for the Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP). All in all, the District received \$109,875 from the North Carolina Division of Soil and Water in 2015.

Program Year 2015 \$109,875 allocated

Agriculture Cost Share (ACSP) - 7 contracts written

1	Litter Spreader	\$10,500	14% of allocation	100% complete
2	Cropland Conversion	\$15,109	20% of allocation	90% complete
2	Livestock Exclusion	\$35,198	47% of allocation	20% complete
1	Sod-based Rotation	\$ 704	1% of allocation	25% complete
1	Pasture Renovation	\$12,255	18% of allocation	0% complete
	Returned to State	\$ 20		

Agricultural Water Resource Assistance Program (AgWRAP) - 1 contract written

1	Water Supply Pond	\$27,500	85% of allocation	10% complete
1	Pond Sediment Removal	\$ 5,000	15% of allocation	5% complete

Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP) - 1 contract written

1	Cistern	\$ 3,588	100% of allocation	10% complete
	Returned to State	\$ 1		

Program Year 2014 \$68,757 allocated

\$50,625 Work completed
\$18,049 Work to be completed
\$ 83 Returned to State

Program Year 2013 \$60,460 allocated

\$43,315 Work completed
\$17,145 Returned to State

Natural Resources Conservation Service

Annual Contract Report for Stanly County work unit...

For 2014 fiscal year the local NRCS office staff obligated 8 contracts for a total of \$39904.43 for the installation or adoption of best management practices identified in a Conservation Plan to address natural resource concerns on 341 acres of working land within the Montgomery/Stnly work unit.

Note: Data is not released as officially recorded information.

Ag Cost Share Programs Available

Soil and Water Conservation Districts implement four cost share programs, all of which share a common goal of increasing water quality. These programs include the Agriculture Cost Share Program (ACSP), the Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program (AgWRAP), the Community Conservation Assistance Program (CCAP), and the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP). The District accepts applications year round for each of these programs. Received applications are ranked based on various criteria and conservation concerns. The highest ranking application is provided assistance to install best management practices.

ACSP—The major cause of water quality problems in the area is non-point source pollution. Damage to our water resources comes from soil erosion, excessive fertilizer use, animal waste contamination, and improper use of agricultural chemicals. The Agriculture Cost Share Program helps address nonpoint source pollution by providing technical and financial resources to local producers to aid in the installation of various best management practices.

AgWRAP—Water quantity concerns are also a point of focus for the District. The Agricultural Water Resources Assistance Program was recently created in order to address these issues. Producer concerns include water to be used for cropland irrigation, and livestock watering. Multiple best management practices are available to assist producers increase their water use efficiency, availability and storage.

CCAP—Nonpoint source pollution stemming from non agricultural sources is also addressed through cost share programs. The Community Conservation Assistance Program is available to address water quality issues that are present in urban, suburban and rural areas. Assistance is available to implement best management practices which address and increase overall water quality.

CREP—Lastly, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program is available to protect environmentally sensitive cropland and marginal pasture land long term. This is accomplished through 10, 15, and 30 year conservation easements.



Education Programs and Initiatives

Agri-Civic Center Day 2014

Agri-Civic Center Day is a celebration of Stanly County's rich agricultural heritage, featuring modern and antique farm equipment, agriculture and livestock exhibits, historic and cultural heritage exhibits, food vendors, live entertainment, art exhibits and more. This event was held August 16, 2014. The District took this opportunity to educate citizens about the importance of good soil health.



Agriculture Awareness Days

Stanly County is a rural community, yet many youth are unaware of the source of their food and sustenance. Stanly SWCD participated in the 10th annual Ag-Awareness Days, hosted by the NC Cooperative Extension, to educate local students about the many different agri-businesses in Stanly County. The District partnered with various agencies and volunteers to provide 12 hands-on rotation stations for the 693 third graders. The 3-day event was held October 7-9, 2014. Just a few of the stations included Soybeans, Forestry, Soils, Livestock, Wheat, Bees, Cotton, Poultry and Corn.



Education and Contests

Investing in our future, our children...

It is the responsibility of each individual citizen to be good stewards of our natural resources. The main focus of all SWCD's is to educate people of all ages about conservation practices that will ensure these resources will be available for generations to come. This year, 3803 students participated in presentations on various topics such as soil health and conservation, water quality and conservation, plant science, soil ecosystems, aquatic ecosystems, and agri-business careers in NC. Audiences ranged from Pre-K to 12th grade.

The District sponsored a poster contest for fifth grade, a computer-generated slideshow (PowerPoint®) contest and essay contest for sixth grade, and a seventh grade public speaking contest. The theme this year for the contest was "Wetlands are Wonderful".

<u>Poster Contest</u>	1 st Place	Emily Speedling Efird	Millington Elementary
	2 nd Place	Alexis Goode	Badin Elementary
	3 rd Place	Serenity Febus-Hopkins	Badin Elementary

<u>PowerPoint®</u>	1 st Place	Nichols Melton	North Stanly Middle
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Nichols' PowerPoint® went on to win 3rd place in the Area VIII competition. The prize was \$10.

<u>Essay</u>	1 st Place	Tilman Hatley	North Stanly Middle
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Tilman's essay went on to win 1st place in the Area VIII competition. The prize was \$30.

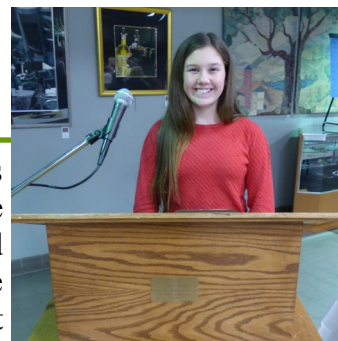
7th Grade

<u>Public Speaking</u>	1 st Place	Marcie Harwood	North Stanly Middle
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Marcie went on to place 3rd in the Area VIII competition. Her prize was \$10.

Annual Education Awards Banquet

The Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District held its annual awards banquet February 23, 2015 at the Agri-Civic Center in Albemarle. The purpose of the banquet is to reward the winners of the educational contests sponsored by the District, as well as recognize the Conservation Farm Family and the No-Till Corn Yield winner. Those present at the banquet included contest winners, District and NRCS employees, SWCD Supervisors, Stanly County Commissioners, principals and teachers, and guests of participants. Other agencies represented at the banquet were Farm Service Agency, North Carolina Forest Service, Cooperative Extension Service, and the Stanly News and Press. Congratulations to all the winners!



Envirothon 2015

The Envirothon is a competition for teams of middle and high school students sponsored by the NC Association of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and the NC Division of Soil and Water Conservation. The curriculum is fun and hands-on, combining in-class studies with outdoor training in Aquatic Ecology, Forestry, Soils and Land Use, Wildlife and Current Environmental Issues. Learning styles emphasize higher order thinking skills such as analysis and interpretation. The Envirothon helps develop environmentally aware citizens who are able to assume future leadership roles.

The all-day competition was held at the Catawba College Center for the Environment. Stanly County is one of 12 counties in Area VIII. A total of 45 teams competed in event. Both the middle school and high school teams took 3rd place. Sponsored by Stanly SWCD, they advanced to the State Envirothon where the MS team placed 6th out of 43.

The teams were formed from the Creation Explorers 4-H Club. Members of the Middle School team are Amelia Martin, Amber Stiller, Evan DiDio, Ethan Wilkins, Dayli Williams and Robbie Dales. High School team members are Lexie Burns, Thomas Maness, Lydia Dales, Seth Stiller and Jaclyn Stiller.



Conservation Farm Family 2014

Each year the Stanly SWCD, as well as all other districts in the state, selects an outstanding farm to be recognized as the Farm Family for the district. In order to be selected for the honor a farm must be actively implementing sound conservation practices as well as being actively involved in conservation education. **Huneycutt Pig Farm**, a highly diversified operation that specializes in commodity crop production, beef cattle, hogs, turkeys and forestry was chosen as the 2015 Stanly SWCD Conservation Farm Family. They came in second in the Area VIII competition.



Stanly SWCD Supports West Stanly HS Ag Day

On March 10-11, 2015, WSHS Ag teacher, Michael Alexander hosted an Agriculture Awareness Day bringing to the students a wealth of information about livestock, bees, soybeans, corn, soil and water conservation, agricultural technology, and forestry. Students were able to see first hand the need for agriculture and agribusinesses. Approximately 800 students filed through the stations during the event.



Resource Conservation Workshop

The RCW is a unique opportunity for a week of intensive study and hands-on conservation activities. Students are required to submit an application and are chosen for participation by the Stanly SWCD Board of Supervisors. Rising high school juniors and seniors are eligible to apply. Students are housed in NC State University campus dormitories under the guidance of live-in counselors. The primary objective of the workshop is to learn about natural resources and their management in today's environment. The District provides sponsorship which pays for registration, lodging, food and travel.

Kristofer Blankenship and Jonathan Page, NSHS students, represented the District June 21-26, 2015.

Kristofer Blankenship, son of Tommy and Kristi Blankenship, is a rising senior at North Stanly High School. He is a member of Future Farmers of America and is a volunteer fireman.

Jonathan Page, son of Mark and Inga Page, is a rising junior at North Stanly High School and also a member of the NSHS FFA.

"It's very important that people know how to conserve minerals and soil to keep good farming lands for growing crops." Jon

"Conservation is extremely important to maintaining, restoring and preserving the earth, and it is very important to me as well." Kristofer

Donations from First Bank and Uwharrie Bank made it possible for these students to attend the workshop.



Kristofer Blankenship

Jonathan Page

Southeastern Soil Health Field Day

On April 29, 2015, Nathan Lowder, NRCS District Conservationist, welcomed everyone to Fork L Farms in Norwood. Approximately 100 individuals from three states attended the Southeastern Soil Health Field Day at Mr. Lowder's family farm.

Jay Fuhrer, a Soil Health Specialist of the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Bismarck, North Dakota led the session on cover crop biology and diversity.

Dr. Matthew Poore, an Extension Livestock Commodity Coordinator Professor and Extension Ruminant Nutrition specialist, conducted the session on rotational grazing mixed species. "Interest in grazing management is increasing rapidly. Amazing things happen when you realize the importance of pasture to livestock production," the NCSU instructor relayed.

Nathan Lowder held the session on plot trials and equipment comparisons. In his field demonstration he discussed the three types of planter configurations that are used to plant no-till crops in heavy cover crop residue.

The afternoon concluded with a question and answer session and door prizes donated by Cody Farms, Muddy Boots and George's Plant Farm. Sponsors for the field day were Stanly County Farm Bureau, Uwharrie Bank, King's Agri-Seeds, NC Cooperative Extension, NC Foundation of Soil and Water, and Stanly Soil and Water Conservation District.



Careers-In-Conservation Scholarship

NC State University student, Jennie Wagner was awarded a \$1000 merit-based scholarship from the Division of Soil and Water for the 2015-2016 school year. The purpose of the scholarship is to increase the number of college graduates from a NC institution who are qualified for careers in natural resource conservation and other closely related fields that aligns with the mission of Soil and Water Districts. Jennie enjoys running, reading, hiking and kayaking.



Tree Seedling Sale

The District sells tree seedlings to the public each year in January. Loblolly, white pine and persimmon were sold for windbreaks, erosion control, farm enhancement and home landscaping. Over 2000 seedlings were sold this year.

No Till Drill Rentals

Stanly SWCD owns a Truax 88 seed drill that enables landowners to plant seed without tilling the soil, thus improving soil health and decreasing erosion. During fiscal year 2015 the drill was used 33 times on a total of 288 acres. The drill was purchased through a grant from the NC Foundation for Soil and Water Conservation in 2008. The income of \$3,200 helped fund the District's education programs. For more information contact our office at 704-986-3059.





North Carolina Foundation for
Soil & Water Conservation, Inc.



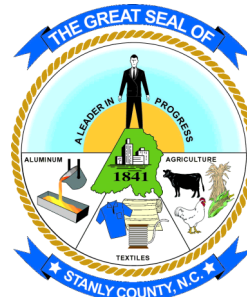
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SOIL AND WATER
CONSERVATION
DISTRICT**

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[http://
stanlycountync.gov/soil-
and-water](http://stanlycountync.gov/soil-and-water)

*Soil and Water
~ Yours for life.*



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The nation that destroys its soil, destroys itself.

- Franklin D. Roosevelt